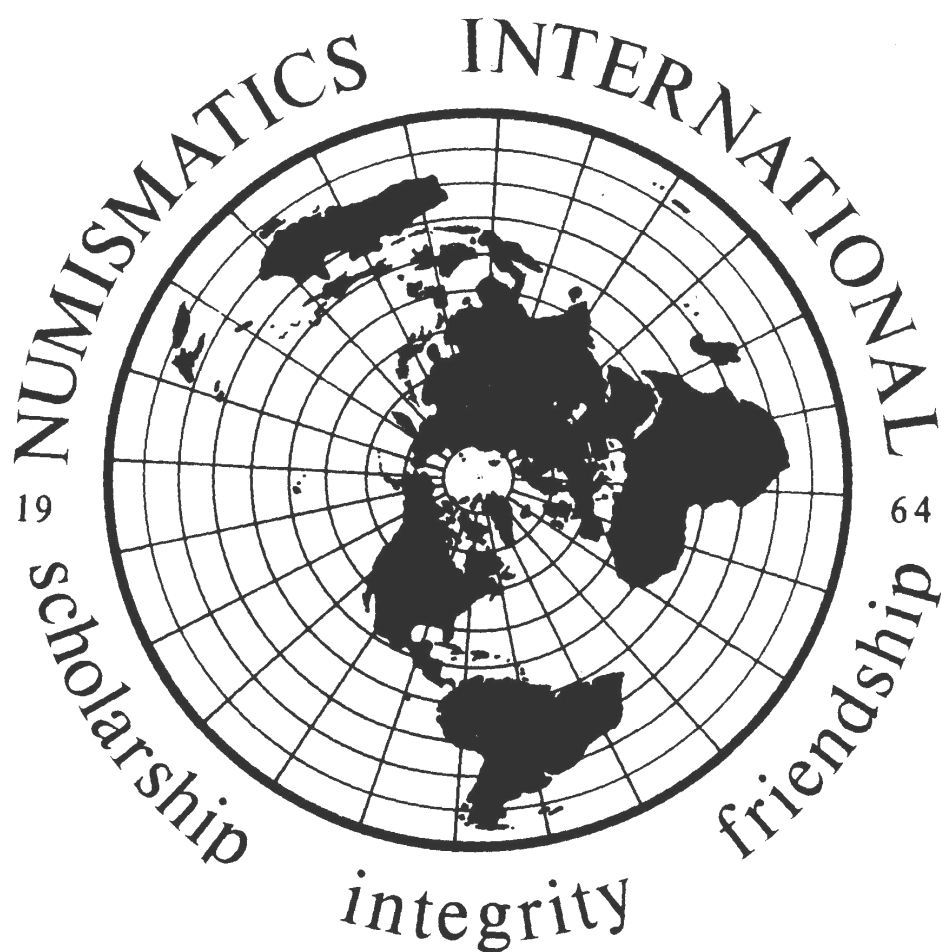


# NI Bulletin

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## OBJECTIVES OF NUMISMATICS INTERNATIONAL

Numismatics International is a non-profit educational organization. Its Objectives are: to encourage and promote the science of numismatics by specializing in areas and nations other than the United States of America; to cultivate fraternal relations among collectors and numismatic students; to encourage and assist new collectors; to foster the interest of youth in numismatics; to stimulate and advance affiliations among collectors and kindred organizations; and to acquire, share, and disseminate knowledge.

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This month we have good variety of articles for you. Volker Ertel takes the lead spot for June with his second article in our bulletins: large coins of Frederick the Wise. From there we go to Italy with Bob Forrest for good health, Bolivia with Alan Luedeking to look at a unique personal medal, then back to Germany. After that it is off to Siberia for an interesting WWI interlude, then across the Sea of Japan to see a very large gold coin. Finally, we end our trip in Colombia to see gold change into brass. We also have the answers to the May crossword puzzle (see p. 129).

Howard Daniel has a report on NI activities in Charlotte NC. NI will also be at the ANA in Milwaukee; please see the notice in the May and in the upcoming July Bulletin.

Herman Blanton



## NI Membership Report

The following persons have applied for membership. Unless objections in writing are received by August 1, 2007 the memberships are effective that day.

2691-MT Tom Pilitowski, PO Box 496607, Port Charlotte, FL 33949  
(USA, Vietnam and China).

2692-MT Roman Martyn (Spanish Colonials, Mexico War of Independence).

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## NI Educational Programs

### Report on the NI Meeting at 2007 Charlotte ANA

The NI Educational Programs Moderator; Howard A. Daniel III, had a table with NI materials and signs at the 2007 ANA National Money Show in Charlotte, NC. Barbara Olson of the ANA obtained a corner club table in an excellent location for our organization.



During the show, Howard passed out almost 300 packets of world coins in the name of NI, with one world banknote in the name of the International Bank Note Society, to young and new collectors. Some packets and reference materials were also given to school teachers who attended the Coins in the Classroom seminar, and to Boy Scout Counselors who attended the Scouts' Coin Collecting Merit Badge meeting. He also explained to the teachers and counselors how they could buy

"junk" world coins (and notes) from many of their local coin dealers to give to their students and scouts to interest them in world numismatics but also to spur them into studying world geography, history, economics, etc.

There was also an NI Educational Meeting on Saturday. It started with information about NI, and then the attendees introduced themselves, and those who had numismatic items with them talked about the pieces for a few minutes. The first talk was by Ed Murphy about the *Rose Collection of Chopmarked Coins*, and he had many of the Rose coins there to show the attendees. If you want to contact Ed, his email address is: [Edgar.Murphy@Fluor.com](mailto:Edgar.Murphy@Fluor.com). A second talk was given by Miguel Chirinos about Simon Bolivar and his travels, and the number of places in the USA that are named after him. He also showed some numismatic pieces with Bolivar on them. If you know of a business, town, county, etc., using the name of Bolivar in the USA or elsewhere, and/or a numismatic or exonomia piece(s) with Bolivar on them, please contact me and I will forward your contact information to Miguel.

Erik Martin of *Coin World* also attended the meeting with his wife, Jennifer, and wrote about it in a recent issue of *Coin World* newspaper.

The next ANA Convention is in Milwaukee, WI, in August 2007. Howard has already reserved a club table for NI and the other numismatic organizations (IBNS, NBS, PCF and the MPCGram) he supports, and a room for NI and IBNS meetings. If you want to speak at a future NI educational meeting in the USA or elsewhere, or if you wish to donate materials to NI (for its collection, library or for giving to young and new numismatists), please contact Howard at [HADaniel3@msn.com](mailto:HADaniel3@msn.com).

**NI**



## Frederick III the Wise, Duke of Saxony and Elector, 1486-1525

Volker Ertel, [www.coingallery.de](http://www.coingallery.de)

Duke Frederick the Wise of Saxony was imperial elector and imperial governor when the emperor was absent or his position vacant. He became the candidate of the church party for the imperial election, but voted for Charles as emperor in 1519. He set up the so-called "Election Capitulation," in which Charles had to agree to numerous restrictions of his imperial power. Frederick was a humanist and founded the University of Wittenberg, birthplace of the Reformation. The pious and tolerant ruler protected and supported Luther, without ever converting to his doctrine.



**Guldengroschen [1500], Annaberg, (1st "Klappmützentaler")**  
 Ø 43mm 29g Schnee 1, Dav. 9705

Obv.: "FRIDERICVS—✠ALBERTVS—S<sup>IO</sup>HOH—ANNES<sup>IO</sup>"

"Frederick Albert John" interrupted by the arms of the Electoral Duchy of Saxony (top), Duchy of Saxony (right), Meissen and Thuringia (left). Bust of Frederick in electoral coat and sword in his right hand.

Rev.: "●MONETA●—●ARGENTINA—DVCVM<sup>IO</sup>—SAXONIE●"

"Silver money from the Duchy of Saxony" interrupted by the arms of Saxony, Meissen, Palatinate Saxony and Thuringia. Busts of dukes Albert and John facing each other and wearing hats with foldable rims.

John the Steadfast was the youngest brother, co-regent and successor of Frederick the Wise.

The *Klappmützentaler* takes its name from the foldable hat rims. Here, the dukes represented on the obverse are wearing hats with rims turned up. After Albrecht's death in 1500, the Klappmützentalers show the name and the effigy of his son George. The coin shown here is one of the oldest of German thalers. After 1500, the rulers of Saxony minted *Guldengroschen* jointly and in substantial numbers. They were the first large silver coins intended for significant circulation. The original name "groschen for a gulden" or "Guldengroschen" refers to the silver content which equaled the value of a gold gulden. Later this large silver coin was called "Thaler," following the use of the word "*Joachimsthaler*" for coins minted in St. Joachimsthal.

since 1520. These were of identical silver content but were minted in much larger numbers.



M&M, Basel

**Guldengroschen, (1513), Nürnberg**

Ø 43mm 28.6g Schnee 39, Dav. 9702

Obv.: "FRID(ERICUS)DVX:SAX(O)N(IAE):E—LECT(OR)I(M)PERI(I)  
—QVE:L—OC(UM):TENE(N)S:GENE(RALIS)"

*"Frederick, Duke of Saxony, imperial elector, Emperor's governor" between arms of the Electoral Duchy of Saxony, Duchy of Saxony, Meissen and Thuringia.*

Rev.: "MAXIMILIANVS·×·ROMANORVM·×·REX·×·AVGVSTVS·×·"

Imperial eagle with nimbus and shield of Austria-Burgundy on the breast.

This commemorative was designed by the famous painter Lucas Cranach the Elder, who had been called to attend Frederick's court in 1505. These coins are also called "*Locumtenens-Taler*" because the legend highlights the position of the governor-general. Such coins were minted in silver, ranging from the 2 Thaler to the 1/4 Thaler. The elector gave them away as presents, particularly on the occasion of a diet. In 1507, during the diet in Constance, King Maximilian I had invested the elector of Saxony with the honor and duty of governor-general of the empire for the time of his absence. The appointment of Fredrick the Wise expired when Maximilian I returned as Roman emperor-elect in 1508. However, Maximilian granted him the honorary title of governor-general for life.



Fritz Rudolf Künker e.K.  
Münzenhandlung

**Guldengroschen, 1522**

Ø 42mm 25.99g Schnee 43, Dav. 9704

Obv.: "FR(I)D(ERICUS)·DVX—SAXON(IAE)—S(ACRI)·RO(MANI):IMP(ERII)  
—ELECT(OR)"

Rev.: "+VERBVM.DOMINI:MANET:IN:AETERNVM" *"The word of the Lord is eternal."*

Cross with flowered ends, in the angles C-C-N-S (Crux Christi Nostra Salus = *Christ's Cross is our salvation*) surrounded by the date M—D—XX—II with ornaments between the letters.

The design of this commemorative follows a picture of Lucas Cranach. It became the model for the commemorative 3-mark-coin, issued in 1917 on the occasion of the 400-year-anniversary of the Reformation. The reigning king of Saxony, Frederick August III, was a Catholic, so his portrait could not well embellish a coin commemorating the Reformation; neither could Luther's portrait, for Luther was a commoner, after all. Frederick the Wise, Luther's protector, offered a way out of this predicament, an excellent choice indeed.



Fritz Rudolf Künker e.K.  
Münzenhandlung

**3 Mark 1917, Muldenhütten**  
Ø 33mm 16.67g Jäger 141

Obv.: "EIN FESTE BURG IST VNSER GOTT 1517-1917 / FRIEDRICH - DER WEISE"

*"A Mighty Fortress is Our God"* (the best known of Martin Luther's hymns).

Rev.: "DEUTSCHES REICH 1917 ★ DREI MARK ★"

During World War I, not much silver was available, so only a few coins were minted. In addition, many coins were lost in the disorder after the war. Less than half have been saved of the original 100 pieces. As this coin is not only rare but also beautifully designed, it now far exceeds the value of its elder model.

*NI*

## Santa Maria Della Salute: A Trip to Venice

Bob Forrest NI #2382

With the Virgin Mary featuring so prominently in the miraculous cures of the sick, it is hardly surprising that one of the many titles given to her in the Litany of Loreto is "*Salus Infirmorum*" or "Health of the Sick," and that numerous images of her and churches dedicated to her relate to this particular role.<sup>1</sup>

Perhaps the most famous such church is that of Santa Maria della Salute (literally St. (or Holy) Mary of Health) in Venice<sup>2</sup> which was built out of gratitude to the Virgin for supposedly ridding the city of the plague of 1630-1631. In the church is an icon, said to have been painted by St. Luke,<sup>3</sup> but actually of 12<sup>th</sup> century date, which has been dubbed "the Madonna of Health" (Madonna della Salute). This icon, which is shown here as Figure 1, was rescued from Candia (now Iraklion, Crete) sometime before the Venetians lost the town to the Turks (in 1669), and installed in the church in Venice in 1670. It was papally crowned in 1922.



Figure 1

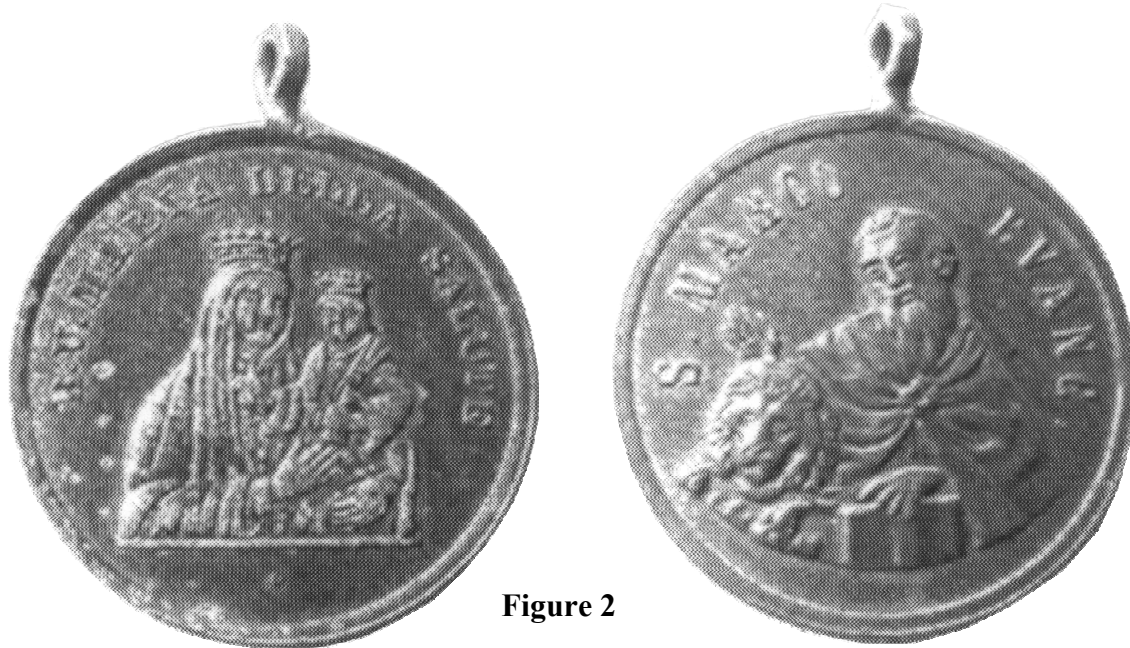


Figure 2

<sup>1</sup> Donald Attwater, *A Dictionary of Mary* (1956), entry "Health of the Sick" (p. 105).

<sup>2</sup> My information here is taken from a guide book to the church, Antonio Niero's *The Basilica of Santa Maria della Salute* (3<sup>rd</sup> edition of 1994).

<sup>3</sup> One of many such – another is the famous painting of "Our Lady of Perpetual Help." See NI Bulletin, January 1999, p. 14 & p. 18 (note 2).

The bronze medal shown 1½ times actual size in Figure 2 is surely a souvenir medal of this splendid Baroque church, even though neither the church nor Venice is specifically named on it. The reverse, with St. Mark the Evangelist (S. MARCO EVANG.) holding a book in his left hand (symbolic of his Gospel) and waving his right hand over the shoulder of a lion, certainly earmarks Venice as the city of origin: St. Mark is the special patron of the city, his remains supposedly being enshrined there in the famous basilica named after him;<sup>4</sup> and the lion, too, has special associations with Venice precisely because, in its winged form, it is the particular symbol of Saint Mark as one of the Four Evangelists.<sup>5</sup> The winged lion is well known to numismatists from its regular appearances on Venetian coinage, of course. It also features repeatedly on tourist souvenirs, such as the delightful bronze medal shown actual size in Figure 3, and which is probably of late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century date. Getting back to the medal in Figure 2, though, the obverse is a recognizable if somewhat loose copy of the icon featured in Figure 1, with the legend B.V. MARIA DELLA SALUTE (= Blessed Virgin Mary of Health). The crowns worn by both the Virgin and Child on the medal would seem to indicate a date of manufacture following the papal crowning of the icon in 1922, though I cannot imagine that this old-looking medal was made any more than a few years after that date.



Figure 3

Incidentally, a modern souvenir medal of the church, acquired on a visit there in 1996, has on the obverse a rather neat close-up view of the icon, showing only the heads and shoulders of the Virgin and Child in colored enamels, and, on the reverse, the four-line legend MADONNA/ DELLA/ SALUTE/ VENEZIA. No guesswork with the attribution of that medal, then!

Much more problematic is the rather crude and somewhat worn medal in bronze shown 1½ times actual size in Figure 4. This may or may not be a souvenir of the Venetian church. Its obverse is similar to that of Figure 2, to be sure, though if it is a copy of the icon, it is a very loose one, so much so that one begins to wonder if it might not actually be a copy of a similar icon somewhere else. The accompanying legend reads S. MARIA D. SALUTE, which is certainly the name of the church in Venice, but, as pointed out in the opening paragraph of this article, it is also the name of numerous images and churches elsewhere.

<sup>4</sup> For the story of their "translation" (some say "theft") from a shrine in Alexandria to Venice, see David Sox, *Relics and Shrines* (1985), pp. 48-9.

<sup>5</sup> The winged lion as a symbol of St. Mark arises from the interpretation of the four faces of the beasts in Ezekiel 1.5ff and the four beasts of Revelation 4.6ff as symbolic of the four Evangelists. See, for example, Arnold Whittick's *Symbols* (1971), pp. 269-270, and for a more detailed treatment, Anna Jameson's *Sacred and Legendary Art* (1883), vol. 1, p. 132ff.

There is a painting of Santa Maria della Salute in the Church of St. Mary Magdalene in Rome, for example, which is said to have been the source of the inspiration for the founding of the Camillian

Confraternity of Our Lady the Health of the Sick in 1860,<sup>6</sup> and

there is another icon known as the Madonna della Salute in the church of Sts. Cosmas and Damian, also in Rome.<sup>7</sup> Add to these that there is a church of the Madonna della Salute at Taranto, another at San Zenone degli Ezzelini near Treviso, and yet another at Abano Terme near Padua,<sup>8</sup> and one begins to see that the presence of the legend S. MARIA D. SALUTE, when accompanying a Madonna and Child which bear only a vague resemblance to those in Figure 1, does not serve as anything like a conclusive link with the church at Venice, particularly not since the crowns (which are noticeably different in style to those in Figure 2) seem to indicate a date after 1922, whereas the medal seems considerably older (19<sup>th</sup> century, I would have guessed). The reverse of the medal in Figure 4 shows St. Anthony of Padua (S. ANTONIO DI PADOVA), holding a lily of purity in his left hand and the Infant Jesus in his right. St. Anthony is a favorite saint for religious medals generally, of course, not least because of his supposed ability to help their wearers locate lost objects! There is an altar dedicated to St. Anthony in the Venetian church of Santa Maria della Salute, but this hardly serves to cement a Venetian origin for this medal, for, as pointed out above, there is at least one church of the Madonna della Salute near St. Anthony's 'home ground' of Padua, though of course, the presence of St. Anthony on a medal does not necessarily indicate a Paduan origin either, for he is a "favorite saint" whose image is to be found on medals struck in all corners of the Catholic world. On balance, I think I would associate the medal of Figure 4 with the Venetian church until something more conclusive comes along to suggest otherwise; after all, on the medal the Infant Jesus does seem to be holding something like the scroll which he is holding in Figure 1. Another possibility worth mentioning, though, is that the image of Figure 4 is not a copy of any particular icon, nor related to any particular church, but is simply a generic image of the Virgin as "Our Lady of Health." If this is the case, any resemblances to Figure 1 would have to be accidental – a case of one Madonna and Child looking pretty much like another.



**Figure 4**

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<sup>6</sup> See the Attwater reference of note 1, also Michael Walsh, *A Dictionary of Devotions* (1993), entry "Our Lady Health of the Sick etc." (p. 186).

<sup>7</sup> See the Website: <http://muskie.fishnet.com/~tommc/spiritualassistant/00jan.htm>.

<sup>8</sup> These and other Italian examples can fairly readily be tracked down on the internet via Google or similar, simply by typing in "Santa Maria della Salute" or "Madonna della Salute." The one near Padua—the church of the Madonna della Salute di Monteortone—can be found at: [http://www.termeeuganee.it/italiano/comuni\\_euganei/abano/monteortone.html](http://www.termeeuganee.it/italiano/comuni_euganei/abano/monteortone.html).

**A Proclamation Piece of La Paz, Bolivia, 1817**  
**Alan Luedeking NI #2282**



(Image enlarged  $\times 1.5$ )

Obverse: Bust of Ferdinand VII facing right with engraved wreath around.

Reverse: Original fields removed and a six-line inscription engraved, *Por / Amor const. / y lealtad á su Rey / El Gôv. Yn<sup>te</sup> D<sup>n</sup> Ju / an Sánchez Lima / Año de 1817* which translates as "For Love, Constancy and Loyalty to his King, the Intendant Governor Don Juan Sánchez Lima, Year of 1817."

I was unable to find any reference whatsoever to this proclamation medal in Pérez Varela, Herrera, Rosa, Medina, Betts, or any sale catalogues. It appears thus far to be unknown and is here published for the first time.

In fact, little is known about the man who created it in the first place, beyond the fact that he was a Spanish official who rose slowly through the ranks and eventually became the Spanish Intendant Governor of the city of La Paz, Bolivia in 1817. It is known from documents in the "Archives of the Indies" (which, regrettably, I have not had occasion to study) that Juan Sánchez Lima was active in some official capacity since at least the year 1808.

On July 20, 1816, Viceroy Pezuela promoted him in rank from Sergeant Major to Lieutenant Colonel and in the same commission ordered him to assume the intendency of La Paz, but only after the current governor, Mariano Ricafort Palacín y Abarca, should choose to leave this post. Meanwhile, Ricafort employed him in loan commissions in Larecaja and in expeditions against insurgents in the valleys.

On May 21, 1817, Viceroy Pezuela again promoted him, this time to full Colonel in the army as a reward for his "distinguished services to his majesty" and in particular for the dangerous and bold expedition he had just completed in the valleys of La Paz, completely vanquishing the insurgent Lira and his followers. Sánchez Lima became the Intendant Governor of La Paz at this time and remained in this post until 1822.

During his tenure he did much to beautify the city (the Alameda is his work) and was popular. Juan Sánchez Lima died some time before May, 1865.

There is little doubt that the piece of which we write was engraved by him right at the time he was promoted colonel and became governor. It is engraved from a worn eight reales coin of which not enough detail remains to identify it, except that it was, of course, a portrait eight reales of Ferdinand VII. The remnants of gilding are still obvious in the recesses and the piece was obviously holed after engraving and worn for a long time. It was undoubtedly a handsome piece at the time of its creation, but remains now only a sadly worn though unique testimonial fragment of one man's loyalty to his king and of his place in history.

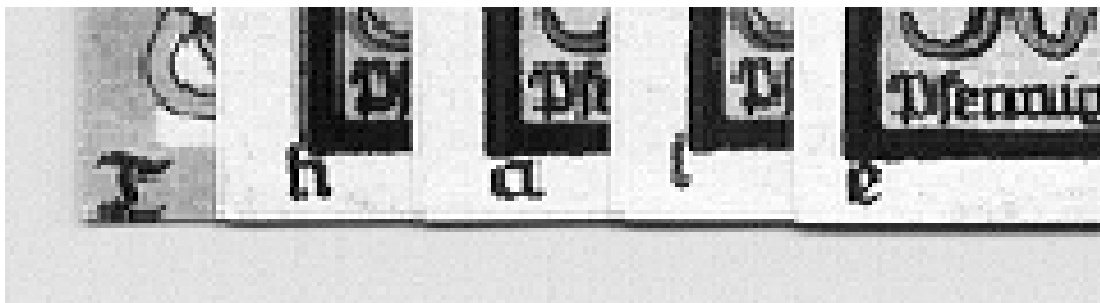
NI

### Unusual German Judaica Notgeld – Thale am. Harz Elmore Scott NI #LM3

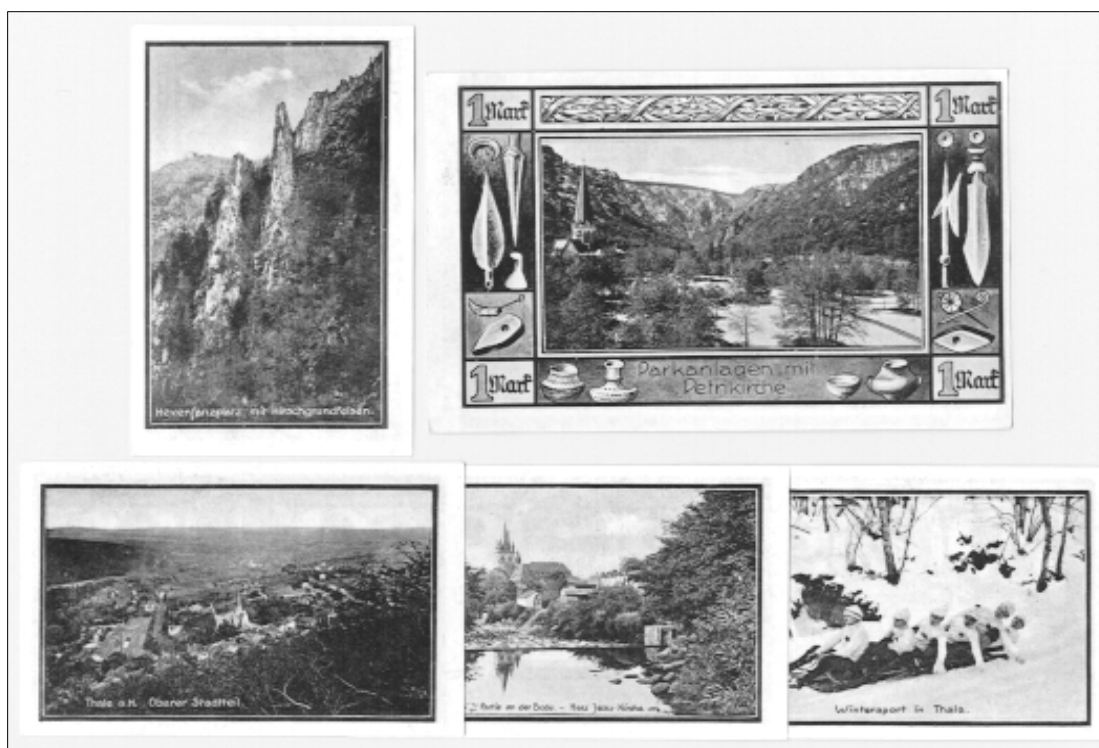




This seldom-seen complete set of Judaica notgeld, shown to the left, was issued by the town of Thale am Harz in the 1920's and portrays a meeting between the Devil and a Jew. The back of each note shows various scenes from near the area. When arranged properly, the complete set of 5 notes (the one mark note followed by the four 50 pfennig notes) spells out the town name from letters in the bottom left corner of each note. See the enlarged picture that is shown below.



The back sides of the notes are also shown below.




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*NI*

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**Answers to crossword puzzle in May 2007 bulletin.**

**Down:** (2) PETER, (3) PASCO, (4) BOGOTA, (6) CHINA, (7) DENARII, (9) CORNUFICA, (10) BETHUNE, (11) CULION, (14) FARTHING, (16) MARY, (17) WRAP. **Across:** (1) SOSPITA, (5) CALBETO, (8) GOAT, (9) CANADA, (12) GRAIN, (13) PHILIP, (15) OHNUKI, (18) MARIANA, (19) HAMBURG.

*NI*

## **Another Time and Another War**

### **Roger deWardt Lane NI #815**

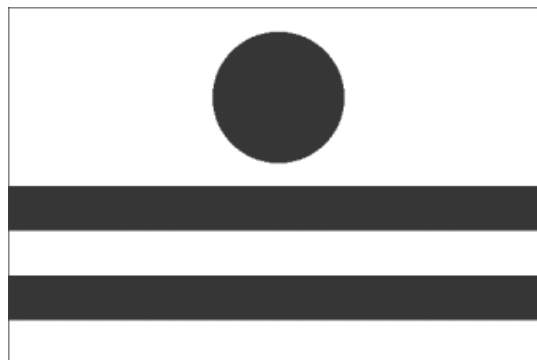
My numismatic interests have for a long period of time been small items, as can be seen in the fact that I produced an electronic book, *Modern Dime Size Silver Coins of the World, with Footnotes to History*, CD-Rom, 2003. Recently, we scanned and cataloged a collection of small notes of the world for "Show and Tell" at our local coin club meetings. The collection started out with paper notes of 10 Cent denominations, issued during periods of silver shortages or wars, and a few other, very small-sized notes to round out the lot, with no organizational scheme except size.

When I scanned an unidentified small-sized note, I e-mailed a picture of it to a numismatic friend, requesting he look through his library to see where it was issued. The legends were Cyrillic and the coat of arms definitely Russian, without crown and with a date of 1918.

At first, just by looking at the pictures in the *Standard Catalog of World Paper Money, Specialized Issues* (Krause Publications) we could not make an identification of the note. We performed the next step jointly, via telephone and with both of us using our computers to Google. At first we were unable to translate the Cyrillic, but eventually we discovered that the first line of the legend was found to mean "Exchange Token" in Russian. The other lines still await translation. But a few partial words in Cyrillic and the date 1918 did point to the Russian Far East and the period after the Russian Revolution of 1917. Then the name "Medvedev" came up on a Google search. With another look at the catalogs, we made the identification. The note was issued in 1920 during a brief period when Chairman Medvedev was leader of the Vladivostok region and General William S. Graves led the American Expeditionary Forces in Siberia.

Vladivostok/Primorye (Zemskiy Sobor)

Chairman Aleksandr Semyonovich Medvedev Jan 31, 1920 – 11 December 1920



**Vladivostok Flag (red on white)**

Provisional Zemstvo Government of Vladivostok

New Russian paper money notes were issued for the currency reform of June 5, 1920. The SWC indicates they were printed on stock of the American Bank Note Company in denominations of 50 Kopecks, 25 rubles and 100 rubles.

No coins of lower denominations were in circulation at this time. The Russian silver 10 Kopecks had last been issued with a date of 1917, but most were not put in circulation by the Soviets. Specially issued Exchange Token notes were printed from plates dated 1918. The 5 Kopecks had black letters on a light-colored paper, a soft gold or orange color, with the Russian Eagle at the center top; the other side is very plain. But the 10 Kopecks and 30 Kopecks notes had different colors and more detailed reverses. The front side of the 10 was on a dull red-brown paper with a small Eagle; the back seems to have had a more vivid red-brown color and a much larger Eagle. The 30 was on green paper with a small Eagle on both sides; the denomination was shown seventeen times on the reverse.



**Figure 1: Pick S1241**  
Russia 1918 (1920) 5 Kopecks, 62×37mm

Although not pictured in the *Standard Catalog of World Paper Money Specialized Issues*, the internet site [http://aes.iupui.edu/rwise/countries/russia\\_specialized.html](http://aes.iupui.edu/rwise/countries/russia_specialized.html) has images of the complete series.



**Figure 2: Russia 1918 10 Kopecks**



**Figure 3: Russia 1918 10 Kopecks (back)**



**Figure 4: Russia 1918 30 Kopecks**



**Figure 5: Russia 1918 30 Kopecks (back)**

As we proceeded with the research, the story of the only time American military forces served on Russian soil came to light. Most of the known details concern the leader of the American forces, General Graves.

William Sidney Graves was Commander of the American Expeditionary Forces (AEF) in Siberia 1918-1920. After graduation from West Point in 1889 he had extensive military service in the U.S. west, the Philippines, Washington, D.C. and in 1918-1920 the Russian Far East. In July 1918, he was promoted to Major General, and in August was ordered to undertake a highly secret mission under direct orders of Secretary of War Newton D. Baker and President Wilson. He traveled immediately to Vladivostok, Siberia, taking command of U.S. forces consisting of two Infantry Regiments and auxiliary units, 10,000 men in all, whose purpose was to protect Allied military stores in depots along the Trans-Siberian Railway, to render whatever aid possible to the Czech Army stranded in Siberia and to discourage Japanese ambitions to annex Russian territories during the confusion and civil fighting that followed the Russian Revolution.

He carried out his orders scrupulously, firmly resisting pressure from British, French and some U.S. diplomats who wished him to take action against Bolshevik factions. The American Expeditionary Force was withdrawn from Siberia in 1920. The United States troops in Siberia never engaged in fighting Red Army troops in the Vladivostok region, before or after the Armistice.

After assignments in Chicago and the Panama Canal, he retired from the Army in 1928, died in 1940 and was buried in Arlington National Cemetery.



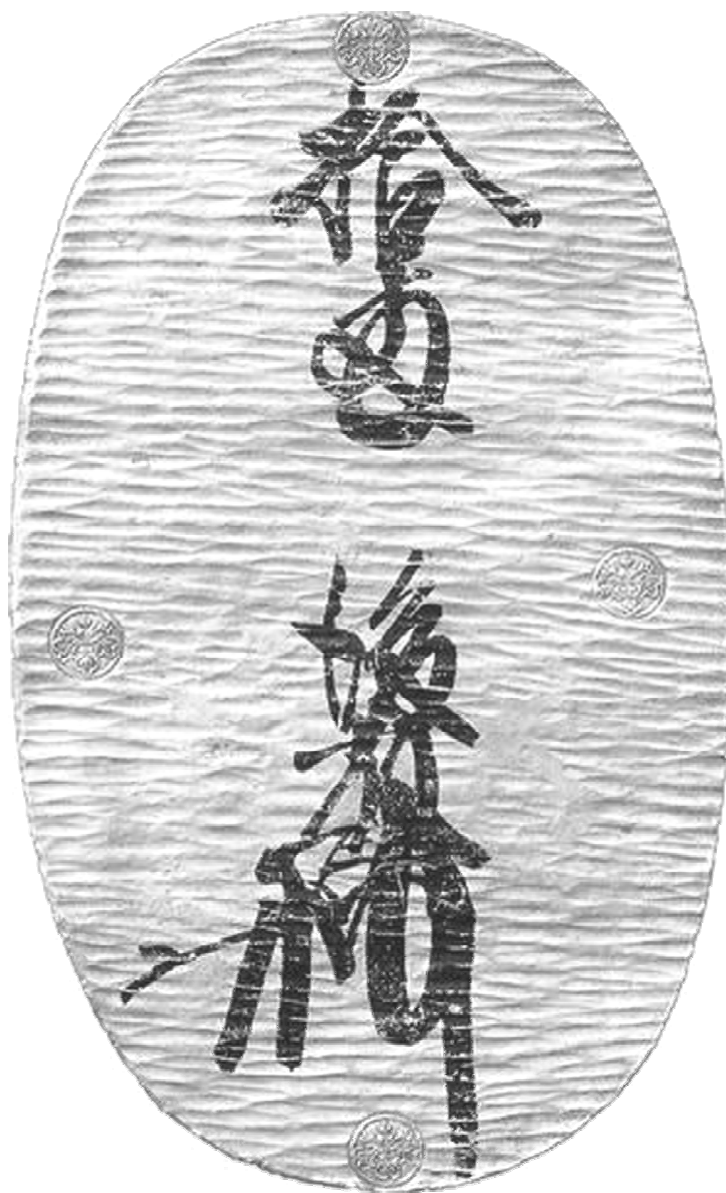
**General Graves and AEF Officers, Vladivostok, 1918**

An interesting related article is on internet: <http://www.hobonickels.org/siberia.htm>.

Thanks to Thomas Augustsson, a director of IBNS, for use of his images in this article.

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**Tensho Oban: Gold and Silver Coins Minted by Toyotomi Hideyoshi**  
Yuichi Nishikawa, Institute for Monetary and Economic Studies, Bank of Japan



**Tensho Oban (Tensho Naga Oban)**

The *Tensho Oban* was minted by Toyotomi Hideyoshi in 1588. An oval coin with a fine-gold content of 70-74 percent, it weighs about 165 grams. The *Naga Oban*, pictured above, was minted in 1592 and is considered the world's largest extant gold coin, with dimensions of approximately 17×10 centimeters.

Following Nobunaga Oda's unification of Japan in the late 16th century, Toyotomi Hideyoshi became the nation's most powerful feudal lord. Using his political influence, he confiscated gold and silver mines and levied taxes on mining profits to enhance his economic power. Securing significant amounts of gold and silver, Hideyoshi minted a series of gold and silver coins from 1573 to 1592.

Of these coins, the most famous was the Tensho Oban. This gold coin, whose 165 grams were equivalent to one bag of gold dust, was stamped with emblems of the *paulownia* (the paulownia is known as the "princess tree" in Japan and is a state symbol—ed.) on both sides as a guarantee of its fine quality. Its weight, as well as the name and signature of the mint official, were written on the obverse in black-ink calligraphy. A large-denomination currency, the Tensho Oban was rarely exchanged in daily transactions. Instead, it served mainly as a reward or gift to the imperial family, aristocrats, or samurai warriors. Mintage of the oban was entrusted to the Goto family (the Goto family specialized in fine metalwork, especially gold and silver—ed.), who had served the Muromachi government (1338-1573) for generations.

In addition to the Tensho Oban, small gold and silver coins named *Tensho Tsuho* and *Eiraku Tsuho* were minted to serve as rewards. Another silver coin, *Gokuyo-gin*, was minted to finance Japan's war in Korea. Its obverse was engraved with characters reading "Gokuyo," to enable *kirizukai*, or the slicing off of a portion of the slug corresponding in weight to the payment demanded.

Most of the coins minted under Hideyoshi's regime served as rewards or gifts, and were not recognized as a means of payment for daily transactions. Nevertheless, historians of Japanese money acknowledge Hideyoshi's gold and silver coins as a form of currency, because merchants in Hakata and Sakai who imported silk and porcelain from China accepted the coins as a means of payment. As a result of their standardization of weight and shape to allow weighing and cutting, Hideyoshi's gold and silver coins helped prepare the way for a unified currency system, which was achieved by Tokugawa Ieyasu during the Edo Period.

Image courtesy of Currency Museum, Institute for Monetary and Economic Studies, Bank of Japan.



## **Colombian 20 Peso Coin: from Gold to Brass**

### **Bernardo González W.**

The 20 peso coin refuses to disappear. It is surprising to find 20 peso coins in circulation dated 2003 because of the ever-increasing inflation since the previous issue dated 1994. However, we are even more surprised that when these coins began to circulate in October 2004 they had a new design. After 38 years the mint once again placed the Liberator, Simón Bolívar, on a new small coin.

Even though Colombia did not issue 20 Pesos gold coins in the 20th century, the mints did strike gold 10 Pesos in 1919 and 1924, plus 5 Pesos and 2-1/2 Pesos with dates ranging between 1913 and 1930. The effective gold standard of the 20 Pesos was preserved in these smaller coins: two 10 Pesos, four 5 Pesos, or eight 2-1/2 Pesos all represented the 20 pesos gold equivalency of 32.258 grams of 0.916 fine gold. Those 32 grams of almost pure gold in 20 peso equivalents which circulated 74 years ago today represent approximately a million pesos. The small brass coin that began to



circulate weighs two grams, is 70% copper, 30% zinc and is practically useless. Its cost of manufacture is higher than the 20 pesos that it represents; it is a good gift for hardware store owners and fastener manufacturers.

Let's make a small survey of this signal coin from its beginnings under the Granadine Confederation in 1859 with details on its mints, dates, metals, etc.

Dates & Mints	Metal / Alloy	Mass grams	Thickness mm	Diam. mm	Description Obverse / Reverse
1859 Bogotá	Gold 0.900	32.258	2.40	34.5	Liberty / Shield of Granadine Confederation
1862, 63, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77. Bogotá	Gold 0.900	32.258	2.60 Edge: Dios Lei Libertad	34.0	Liberty / Shield of United States of Colombia
1863, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 77, 78 Popayán	Gold 0.900	32.258	2.60 Edge: Dios Lei Libertad	32.3	Liberty / Shield of United States of Colombia
1868, 69, 71, 72, 73. Medellín	Gold 0.900	32.258	2.60 Edge: Dios Lei Libertad	34.0	Liberty / Shield of United States of Colombia
1982 Foreign	Copper 92% Aluminum 6% Nickel 2%	6.0	1.60 Plain Edge	24.5	<i>Poporo Quimbaya</i> / 20 pesos
1983, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89 Ibagué	Copper 92% Aluminum 6% Nickel 2%	6.00	1.60 Plain Edge	24.5	<i>Poporo Quimbaya</i> / 20 pesos
1989, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94 & 2003 Ibagué	Copper 92% Aluminum 6% Nickel 2%	3.60	1.40 Grooved Edge	20.0	Shield Republic of Colombia / 20 pesos, laurel wreath.
2004 Ibagué	Copper 70% Zinc 30%	2.00	1.15 Grooved Edge	17.2	Profile of the Liberator, surrounded by the legend República de Colombia, 2004, Simón Bolívar / 20 PESOS

Liberty is represented on these coins with a feminine head.  
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